

School Safety and Violence Prevention Act Report to the Legislature (*Education Code* Section 32228)

Introduction

In the spring of 1999, Chapter 51, Statutes of 1999 [Assembly Bill 1113 (Florez)], added Article 3.6 (*Education Code*, Sections 32228. to 32228.2) and Article 3.8 (Section 32239.5) to Chapter 2 of Part 19 of the *Education Code*, and established the School Safety and Violence Prevention Act to take effect immediately to encourage schools to establish and strengthen violence prevention activities in their communities. The Legislature provided \$101 million to districts and county offices of education, statewide. The 2000-2001 Budget provided \$72 million for districts and county offices of education. This report summarizes planning activities, results, and expenditures of local education agencies under the School Safety and Violence Prevention Act.

Background

AB 1113, signed into law June 1999, added Article 3.6 (*Education Code*, sections 32228. to 32228.5) and Article 3.8 (Section 32239.5) to Chapter 2 of Part 19 of the *Education Code*, and established the School Safety and Violence Prevention Act to take effect immediately. The School Safety and Violence Prevention Act was funded at \$100 million, \$29 million of which was one time funding. AB 658 (Washington)(Chapter 645, Statutes of 1999), amended Article 3.6 *Education Code*, sections 32228.1 of and added 32228.3 to Chapter 2 of Part 19 of the *Education Code*, provided \$1 million for the inclusion of county offices of education (COE). The population focus is the high school level, grades 8 through 12. The areas of emphasis for expenditure include hiring student support services staff and personnel trained in conflict resolution, establishing staff training programs, creating cooperative arrangements with law enforcement agencies, providing on-campus security and communication devices, and implementing other programs that assist in reducing the incidence of violence in schools.

In the 2000-2001 Budget, the Legislature expanded the Act to include grades K-12, and added funding. The Governor reduced the new funding in the 2000-2001 Budget. In his veto message, Governor Gray Davis said:

“I am deleting the \$61,200,000 legislative augmentation for the provision of school safety block grants to elementary, middle, and junior high schools. I am concerned about the well being and safety of California children of all ages, and signed legislation last year that requires schools to develop safety plans. This budget includes \$1.8 billion to increase discretionary funding beyond the statutory COLA and \$425 million for block grants; these resources are all available for K-12 school safety purposes based on local school district priorities. Therefore, this augmentation is unnecessary.”

Thus, although the School Safety and Violence Prevention Act has been technically expanded to authorize grades K-12 activities, funding is provided only for enrollment in grades 8-12. The

statute requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to report funding results to the Legislature annually. Although the increased block grant funding was intended to also include school safety priorities, there is no reported information about the extent to which block grant funding (other than the School Safety and Violence Prevention Act) has been used for safety related expenditures.

This School Safety and Violence Prevention Act report includes:

1. Safety priorities on which school districts planned to spend their funds for 1999-2000 as indicated in their first year applications
2. Actual expenditures, as indicated in their year end report for 1999-2000
3. Planned expenditures for 2000-2001, as indicated in year two applications

Description of Funding Guidelines

Funding in 1999-2000 was allocated to school districts on a formula specified in the statute. Funding was \$10,000 per district, \$5,000 per school, or a per-pupil allocation of approximately \$48 per student enrolled in grades 8–12, whichever represented the largest allocation for the school district. County offices of education received \$10,000, \$5,000 per school, or a per-pupil allocation of \$13 per student, whichever represented the largest allocation.

Emphasis of School Safety and Violence Prevention Act Funding

The Act requires that school districts and county offices of education receiving funding to use the funds to supplement, but not supplant, existing expenditures for safety resources and programs. The statute authorizes school districts and county offices of education receiving funding to provide for safe schools and prevent violence among pupils through any of the following:

- Providing schools with personnel, including but not limited to, licensed or certificated school counselors, school social workers, school nurses, and school psychologists who are trained in conflict resolution. Any law enforcement personnel shall be trained and sworn peace officers
- Providing effective on-campus communication devices and other school safety infrastructure needs
- Establishing an in-service training program for school staff to learn to identify at-risk pupils, to communicate effectively with those pupils, and refer them to appropriate counseling
- Establishing cooperative arrangements with local law enforcement agencies for appropriate school-community relationships
- Preventing and responding to acts of hate violence and bias-related incidents, including implementation of programs and instructional curricula consistent with school safety goals
- For any other purpose that would materially contribute to meeting the goals in providing safe schools and preventing violence among pupils

School districts and county offices of education receiving funding under the School Safety and Violence Prevention Act must assure that:

- They will follow a collaborative planning process to develop funding priorities.
- Collaborations should involve students, parents, law enforcement, school staff, family serving organizations, and others.
- Spending decisions will be determined consistent with the mandated review and update of School Safety Plans [Senate Bill 187 (Hughes), Chapter 736, Statutes of 1997], and with their long-term school safety goals. Schools can update school safety plans by participating in regional Safe School Plan Training.
- Planned expenditures/activities are linked to the ‘Principles of Effectiveness’ practices. (‘Principles of Effectiveness,’ including needs assessment, measurable objectives, proven practices, and evaluation must be followed to qualify for certain federal funds.)

Data Collection

School districts and county offices of education submitted data on actual expenditures for 1999-2000 and planned expenditures for 2000-2001 to CDE in November 2000. Districts reported on their safety priorities and described expenditures under the broad categories established in the School Safety and Violence Prevention Act. (**Attachment A** is the summary of the use of funds by category for the School Safety and Violence Prevention Act 1999-2000.)

Nine hundred and nine school districts and 58 county offices of education serve students in grades 8–12, making them eligible for School Safety and Violence Prevention Act funding. In 1999-2000, 878 school districts and 57 county offices of education applied for funding.

Data Summary

School District Funding Priorities for School Safety

In planning how to spend the School Safety and Violence Prevention Act funds, school districts identified safety priorities which fell under the broad categories of staffing, training, infrastructure, law enforcement partnerships, and crisis response preparation and planning. Crisis response planning was a frequently cited expenditure area. Crisis response planning reflects concerns of schools about their readiness to respond to emergency situations. Crisis response planning also includes schools’ need to refine their school safety plans annually and to include information on the plan in their School Accountability Report Cards, as required by law.

1999-2000 School Safety Funding Distribution and Actual Expenditures

In 1999, 878 school districts received the School Safety and Violence Prevention Act funding, and 31 school districts declined funding or did not submit applications. Fifty-seven county offices of education received funding. One county office of education did not apply.

School districts and county offices submitted budget expenditure reports for 1999-2000 that included the categories of Personnel, Communication Devices and Infrastructure, Staff Training, Cooperation with Law Enforcement, and Other. School districts and county offices of education allocated their funds as follows:

- **Personnel** (52.2 percent) was the largest category of total expenditures of School Safety and Violence Prevention funding. More than half of all funding to school districts was used to hire additional certificated or classified student support services staff, law enforcement personnel, or other staff. School counselors represented the highest expenditure for student support services staff. Student support staff includes school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, and school nurses. Student support staff comprised almost half of the expenditures in the Personnel category. Law enforcement personnel, which include sworn officers, campus supervisors, and security officers, represented about one third of the category. Please refer to Attachment A for the specific breakdown of expenditures.
- **Communications/Infrastructure** (27.05 percent) was the second highest category of expenditures, and included items such as communication phone systems, walkie-talkies, video cameras, fencing, security lighting, and capital outlay for building renovation and modification. Nearly half of the expenditures within this category was for communication devices, primarily phone systems. Almost a quarter of this category was spent for infrastructure improvements and included fencing, alarm systems, security lighting, and building renovations. Surveillance equipment, especially video cameras, accounted for about one tenth of the expenditures within the category.
- **Training** (9.46 percent) was the third highest category of expenditures. Training included all areas of conflict resolution and safety training and planning for staff, students, and parents. Within the training category, staff training represented more than two thirds of the expenditures, in areas such as conflict resolution, safe school planning, crisis response, and student assistance programs. Student training accounted for approximately one quarter of the category expenditures, and was spent on conflict resolution training, peer and student leadership programs and other training.
- **Other** (7.76 percent) was the fourth highest category of total expenditures. This category included safety consultation and planning, publicity, transportation, crisis response and safety equipment/supplies, drug testing, software, and instructional materials.
- **Law enforcement partnerships** (3.58 percent) represented the smallest proportion of the total expenditures, and included police department training, evacuation exercises, police liaisons, joint publications, bicycle patrols, fingerprinting, drug searches, truancy sweeps, gang prevention education, youth diversion activities, and school assemblies.

2000-2001 School Safety and Violence Prevention Act Distribution

In 2000-2001, 909 school districts and 58 county offices of education are eligible for School Safety and Violence Prevention Act funding. A total of 904 districts completed and submitted applications for funding. Only five of the eligible districts declined funding or did not submit applications.

Applications for the School Safety and Violence Prevention Act funds for 2000-2001 indicate that safety priorities and planned expenditures are similar to 1999-2000 expenditures. However,

much of the material and capital outlay spending had been for one time only costs in 1999-2000, and applications for 2000-2001 include more planned expenditures for staffing, crisis response planning, training and services, than in facility renovation and security.

2000-2001 School Safety and Violence Prevention Act Planned Funding Categories

School districts plan to spend the 2000-2001 allocations within the categories in the following ways:

- **Personnel costs** — 63.6 percent of the total funding for additional staffing including counselors, psychologists, law enforcement and security staff, and student support personnel
- **Communication Devices and Infrastructures** — 15.5 percent of the total for communication devices and video cameras, fencing, and security lighting
- **Cooperation with Law Enforcement** — 7.8 percent for gang prevention education, youth diversion activities, and school assemblies and related activities
- **Other** — 7.4 percent for a variety of uses including vehicles, software, instructional materials, and programs
- **Training** — 5.8 percent for all areas of training and safety planning

Collaborative Planning for School Safety and Violence Prevention Act Funding

School districts reported the committee members involved in planning for the School Safety and Violence Prevention Act funding. Principals, teachers and parents were the groups most often involved in planning. However, many school districts identified classified staff, law enforcement, student support services staff, and students as participants in their planning process. Following are the reported participants in local collaborative planning groups:

Principals (92 percent)
Teachers (91percent)
Parents (79 percent)
Classified (74 percent)
Law Enforcement (69 percent)
School Safety Coordinators (62 percent)
Counselors/Psychologists/Nurses (60 percent)
Students (53 percent)
Community Organizations (39 percent)
Other — Superintendents and their assistants, Vice Principals, safety consultants (34 percent)

Data Resources Utilized for School Safety and Violence Prevention Act Funding

School districts used a variety of data sources for planning for expenditures of School Safety and Violence Prevention Act funding. The sources are listed in order from highest to lowest percentage of use:

- **School safety plans of school sites** (93 percent)
Each school is required by law to have a Safe School Plan that includes the following: school crime assessment, appropriate strategies that will maintain school safety, disaster and child abuse procedures, policies leading to expulsion or suspension, sexual harassment policy, procedures for safe ingress and egress to and from school, policy for schoolwide dress codes, and school discipline procedures. Teachers, parents, students, law enforcement, and members of the community should be involved in developing the safe school plan for a school site.
- **California Safe Schools Assessment** (72 percent)
The California Safe Schools Assessment is a school-based report of crime incidents, including drug and alcohol offenses, crimes against persons, and property crimes. School districts and county offices of education report their crime incident rates in an annual report.
- **Annual Report for the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act, Title IV of Improving America's Schools Act** (63 percent)
This Act provides for school-based comprehensive drug and violence prevention programs created to serve students employees, staff and the school community. Schools are funded through federal Title IV funds to provide learning support activities, student and family services, early intervention activities, and violence prevention strategies including conflict resolution, after school programs, and character education.
- **California Healthy Kids Survey** (48 percent)
The California Healthy Kids Survey is a voluntary, comprehensive youth health and risk behavior prevalence survey in which all schools may participate. Districts are encouraged to use the data from this survey to accurately assess needs and plan programs.
- **Other** (28 Percent)
Other data sources have included various surveys of staff, students, and parents.

School Safety and Violence Prevention Act: Conclusions and Considerations

Timeline and Planning

School districts received the first allocation of School Safety and Violence Prevention Act funding in March of 2000 for use in the 1999-2000 fiscal year. Many school districts were unable to spend their allocation during the remainder of the school year, and instead developed the planning process to use the funds over two years.

School districts were very enthusiastic about receiving the 2000-2001 funding allocation, and stated they were able to plan more effectively for long term needs with the second year funding. School districts were also grateful to receive funding that allowed planning time, did not include strict expenditure deadlines, and could be carried over for use in subsequent years. They greatly appreciated the broad scope of the school safety funding, which encouraged the use of school planning and safety groups as part of the decision-making process. School districts were

primarily interested in responding to their unique situations and meeting their most pressing local needs, without prescriptive spending requirements.

Safety Priority Considerations and Impact

The majority of funds that school districts were able to spend during the 1999-2000 fiscal year, supported increased staffing for student support services, especially school counseling positions. However, despite the increased use of funding for counselors, the pupil-to-counselor ratio for school counselors in California remains the worst in the nation. The 1999-2000 California Basic Education Data System (CBEDS) indicates that the pupil-to-counselor ratio improved from last years' ratio of 1021-to-1 to the current ratio of 979-to-1. This equates to an increase of 6.11 percent full-time equivalent (FTE) counselors — from 5,727 to 6,077 — adding approximately 350 FTE school counselors to California's public schools. However, **not all** of these additional school counselors were **a result of** the School Safety and Violence Prevention Act funding. While this is an improvement, it would take approximately 5,000 more counselors for California to attain the national average pupil-to-counselor ratio of 561-to-1.

Actual school level pupil-to-counselor ratios vary greatly from district to district due to local priorities, but they also vary from grade level to grade level. A recent statewide survey of school districts indicated the following averages by grade level: high schools 543 to 1; middle schools 786 to 1, and elementary schools 3,858 to 1. Such a significant disparity in pupil-to-counselor ratios reinforces the need for more student support staff in the elementary and middle school levels. Additionally, the 1999-2000 CSSA report shows a 17 percent increase in 'crimes against persons' at the elementary and middle grade levels.

The other increase in staffing was reflected in law enforcement assistance and campus security. Law enforcement personnel included sworn officers, campus supervisors, and security officers and accounted for nearly a fifth of total staffing expenditures.

The second priority for expenditures under this program was to improve school infrastructure and security. Telephone and other communication systems represented the largest portion of expenditure in this area. Many school districts needed to update their telephone communication systems.

The third priority for school districts was to develop or expand training programs to increase the safety of students and staff, especially conflict resolution training. School districts also invested in law enforcement partnerships to initiate and strengthen their crisis response training efforts. Updating school safety plans was also an important focus of training.

School Safety and Violence Prevention funding has been a much needed and welcome addition to school districts' safety efforts. The complexities of the present era have influenced school districts to improve their community's physical safety and address violence prevention issues through staff and student programs and services.

School Safety and Violence Prevention Act (AB 1113, AB 658) Use of Funds, 1999-2000 Report

Total 1999-2000 Reported Expenditures by Category

Percentage Key: Percentages below reflect the percent of the reported total expenditures for 1999/2000, by category total, followed by category area breakdown. The expenditures are as follows: (1) Staffing: 52.2 percent of total expenditures; (2) Law Enforcement Partnership: 3.58 percent of total expenditures; (3) Infrastructure: 27percent of total expenditures; (4) Training: 9.46 percent of total expenditures; (5) Other: 7.76 percent of total expenditures.

I. Staffing	Cost:	
<i>Student Support</i>		
<i>Services:</i>	School	Contract
School Counselors	14.00%	4.20%
School Psychologists	.85%	.59%
School Social Workers	.74%	.83%
School Nurses	.26%	.27%
<i>Law Enforcement:</i>		
Sworn Officers	1.39%	5.60%
Campus Supervisors	7.41%	.60%
Security Officers	2.16%	.94%
<i>Other:</i>	8.32%	4.04%
Total Staffing Costs:	35.13%	17.07%

II. Law Enforcement Partnership:	Cost
<i>Activities, excluding staff costs:</i>	3.58%
Total Law Enforcement Partnership Costs:	3.58%

III. Infrastructure:	Cost
Communication Devices (includes phones, walkie/talkies)	12.37%
Surveillance/ Detection /ID	3.31%
Building Modifications (includes fencing, lighting, etc)	5.93%
Vehicles:	1.98%
<i>Other:</i>	3.46%
Total Infrastructure Costs:	27.05%

IV. Training:	Cost
<i>Staff Training</i>	
Conflict Resolution	2.38%
Diversity Education	0.23%
Hate Motivated Behavior	0.12%
Student Risk Assessment (including Identifying At-Risk Students and Referrals)	0.29%
Security Officer Training (SB1626)	0.28%
Safe School Planning	0.52%
Crisis Response	0.51%
Asset Development/Resiliency	0.13%
Student Assistance Program (SAP)	0.51%
Student Discipline	0.07%
<i>Other:</i>	1.68%

<i>Parent Training</i>	Cost
Parent Education	0.30%
Asset Development/Resiliency	0.15%
<i>Other:</i>	0.06%

<i>Student Training</i>	Cost
Peer Programs/Student Leadership	0.72%
Conflict Resolution/Mediation	0.75%
<i>Other:</i>	0.76%

Total Training Costs: 9.46%

V. Other Uses of Funds:	Cost
Indirect administrative fees	2.60%
<i>Other:</i>	5.16%

Total Other Cost: 7.76%